



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/540,947	03/31/2000	Karim Mohie El Din Hussein	MIT-057AUS	2548

22494 7590 01/10/2005

DALY, CROWLEY & MOFFORD, LLP
SUITE 101
275 TURNPIKE STREET
CANTON, MA 02021-2310

EXAMINER

HAILU, TADESSE

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2173

DATE MAILED: 01/10/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/540,947	Applicant(s) KARIM MOHIE EL DIN HUSSEIN	
	Examiner Tadesse Hailu	Art Unit 2173	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 October 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 7-20, 22 and 52 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 7-10, 20, 22 and 52 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 11-19 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is in response to the Amendment submitted and entered on October 6, 2004.

Priority

2. The present application claims priority from domestic US Application 60/127,672 filed April 2, 1999.

Status of the claims

3. The pending claims 1-5, 7-20, 22 and 52 are examined herein as follows:

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-5, 7-10, 20, 22 and 52 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hussein et al, "CAIRO: A System for Facilitating Communication in a Distrusted Collaborative Engineering Environment," 1995 in view of Kelly et al, "A Facilitator's General Model for Managing Socio-Emotional Issues in Group Support Systems Meeting Environments," pages 114-123, IEEE, 1997.

Kelly's paper describes the socio-emotional dimension that exists in a Group Support System (GISS) meeting environments from the perspective of the facilitator

Hussein discloses a collaboration agent interaction and synchronization system (CAIRO), a system for managing participants in a distributed conference. CAIRO system comprises a plurality of participants (e.g., participant (a), participant (b), etc., in Figs. 2, and 4); a plurality of collaborative managers (facilitators) (see section 4); each participant engaged in a CAIRO conference spawns a *Collaborative Manager* (shown as a dashed box) which is comprised of media drivers (shown as pictograms of the media – i.e., video camera, microphone and X display) and message server (indicated by “MSG”) (see section 4, Fig. 4). One or more of these media drivers enables to monitor (e.g., camera) communication of a participant in the system (section 4.2). One or more of these media drivers also enables to compare the communication of the participant to a predetermined set of communication passage (as shown in X display). One or more of these media drivers also enables providing a prompt (e.g., for active speakers) to a participant in the conference system in response to the means for comparing finding a match between the communication of a participant and one of the predetermined set of communication passages (sections 3-3.1.2, 4.2-5).

While the CAIRO system describes social issues, social interaction, but the CAIRO system does not explicitly describe the role of social agents as claimed in the present invention. Kelly relates to a Group Support Systems (GSS) Meeting Environments, such as group meetings. Kelly also describes the role of social agents in this environment. The GSS system also includes a plurality of social agents each of said social agents associated with a corresponding one of said plurality of participants (see sections 2-3), the social agents in GSS system include means for monitoring relevant

components of a design environment and suggesting appropriate actions to be taken by a participant (see sections 3, 3.15, and 3.2) and means for learning how to effectively represent each individual of a plurality of individuals in the design environment (see section 4).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to incorporate the role of the social agent described in Kelly with Hussein because these agents could manage social issues in the CAIRO system meeting environment.

With regard to claim 2:

Hussein in view of Kelly further describes means for learning communication passages by being presented with one or more situation action pairs, which are classified in a rule-base such that said Collaborative Manager/ facilitator agent can proactively respond to future situations without user intervention (see Kelly, sections 3-3.2, Fig. 1).

With regard to claim 3:

Hussein in view of Kelly further describes means for monitoring and suggesting by being presented with one or more situation-action pairs, which are classified in a rule-base such that said social agent can proactively respond to future situations without user intervention (see Kelly, sections 3-3.2, and Fig. 1).

With regard to claim 4:

Hussein in view of Kelly further describes the social agents express an emotion of a participant (see Kelly, section 1).

With regard to claim 5:

Hussein in view of Kelly further describes said facilitator agents suggests a change of forum in response to a particular agenda item (see Hussein, section 3.1.1).

With regard to claim 7:

Hussein in view of Kelly further describes several features including The Group Screen, anonymity, and real-time feedback used by Facilitator agent in surfacing and managing socio-emotional (reaction) issues (see Kelly, pages 121-122).

With regard to claim 8:

Hussein in view of Kelly further describes the features of Facilitator agent including forum servers/*forum moderator* as a "means for coupling to a control mechanism" and group *control procedures and paradigms* as "means for establishing an appropriate control mechanism for a given forum setting." (Hussein, sections 3-3.1.2).

With regard to claim 9:

Hussein in view of Kelly further describes the features of Facilitator agent including means for building a rapport with a conferring participant through an interface technique the builds trust between the participant and the agent (Hussein, sections 4-4.1).

With regard to claim 10:

Hussein in view of Kelly further describes the features of Facilitator agent including means for presenting a choice to a participant and means for accepting a decision from participant (Hussein, sections 2.2.2-2.2.3).

With regard to claim 20:

Hussein in view of Kelly further describes the features of Facilitator agent distinguishes between brainstorming/free control strategy, a lecture control strategy, and a chairperson control strategy (Hussein, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, and 3.1.3)

With regard to claims 22 and 52:

Hussein in view of Kelly further describes the features of a facilitator agent, a social agent that deals with socio-emotional aspect of the user/participant. The social agent/facilitator includes means for becoming more familiar (e.g., understanding the people/participant, etc) with a participant with which the agent is associated (Kelly, section 3.1.2). A facilitator agent /social agent further includes means for cooperating (e.g., address issues involving emotions and relationship) with the agents of other participants (within groups in GSS meetings) in the conferencing system to decide upon an appropriate meeting control scheme (Kelly, sections 1, 3.1.2-3.1.5). The facilitator agent /social agent further includes means for reaching a consensus (e.g., taking a proactive position in addressing socio-emotional issues, section 3.1.3) on a meeting process intervention (Kelly, pages 117-118).

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 11-19 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The prior art of records fails to describe the limitations specified in claims 11-19.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed 10/6/04 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that Hussein does not describe any agent, which includes the features as specified in claim 1. The Examiner disagrees because Hussein, also one of the current inventor describes CAIRO, also the basis of the current invention, describes similar agent (e.g., *Collaboration Manager/facilitator* agent), which includes similar features as specified in claim 1 (see Fig. 4). The applicant also argues the combination of the references. The Examiner strongly disagrees because the two analogous arts, which relates to group meetings are combinable. The analysis given by the Examiner is also appropriate.

CONCLUSION

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Tadesse Hailu, whose telephone number is (571) 273-4051. The Examiner can normally be reached on M-F from 10:00 - 630 ET. If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, John Cabeca, can be reached at (571) 273-4048 Art Unit 2173.

9. An inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-3900.

Examiner Tadesse Hailu
Art Unit 2173 - Operator Interface
1/5/05

